

MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
TOWN HALL
Monday, July 7, 2008
7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:26 by Chairman Firenze in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall. All selectmen were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were also present.

QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS

Steve Marlin, a Channing Road resident, appeared before the Board with concerns regarding the cancellation of the Channing Road and Cross Street intersection redesign.

Selectman Jones said that while the general approach of directing the limited funds toward arterials and collectors is sound, it seems appropriate to leave safety issues to the discretion of the police and fire departments. Selectman Leclerc expressed that he was not aware that this project was contingent upon the override passing. He said that he would like to see this completed and that projects going forward will be road surfaces on arterials and collectors only. The cost is \$100,000, which is less than 4% of the \$2.4M that's available, he added. Chairman Firenze replied that a lot can be done with \$100,000 and that in doing this project, the town would be losing a street that needs to be resurfaced. He added that he had voted to accept this originally (the Channing Road plan) when he thought the override would pass. He agreed that it was a safety issue, but added that safety issues (that there is no money to address) exist throughout town. Firenze suggested that since Cross Street was among the roads targeted to be repaved, why not address the traffic redirection to some extent at that time.

Selectman Jones said he would like to know exactly how many such intersections with a public safety impact exist. He expressed interest in some kind of scaled-back project that would still reshape the roadway for safety reasons but leave off the granite curbs and new sidewalks. It was noted that the road contracts need to go out to bid very soon and there would not be time to redesign the project.

After continued discussion, Selectman Leclerc made the following motion:

The Board Moved: that the town spend up to \$93,000 on the Channing Road/Cross Street intersection project, to best address the traffic and safety issues in a manner to be determined by Community Development Director Glenn Clancy.

The motion failed (1-2).

ACTION BY WRITING

Easement to Verizon New England for Telecommunications Services for Waverley Woods, McLean Hospital

Mr. Burgio, the Verizon representative, appeared before the Board to request an easement from Pleasant Street into Waverley Woods, then into the McLean complex.

Selectman Leclerc spoke on behalf of the Board stating that Verizon has not been in compliance with state law which requires that when an old pole is replaced with a new pole, the old pole be

removed by Verizon. Throughout Belmont there are a number of unsightly double poles, which are an irritant to the residents.

The Board moved: To not approve the easement request at this time.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Chair Firenze suggested that Mr. Burgio come back to the Board with a plan for how to remove the old poles. The Board indicated its intention not to approve any further requests from Verizon until Verizon can show that the issue is being addressed.

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

School Committee Vacancy and Appointment Process

School Committee (SC) Chairman John Bowe and SC member Laurie Graham appeared before the Board to discuss the process for replacing the vacancy created when Dr. Stafford resigned recently from her school committee position.

SC Chairman Bowe stated that the five SC members together with the three Selectmen would review applicants and vote on a replacement. Applicants will submit a letter of interest due on August 15th. It was decided that the Board of Selectmen and School Committee will hold a joint meeting on September 4 to meet the applicants and engage in a short question/answer process.

OTHER

Youth Commission Awards

Laurie Graham appeared before the Board on behalf of the Youth Commission regarding the "Belmont Youth/Teen of the Month" program. She requested that the presentation of the award be made at Board of Selectmen meeting(s). The Board agreed to present the gift certificate awards on behalf of the Youth Commission - on a periodic basis only.

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT (continued)

Community Forum Response Process

The Board discussed the issue of holding more frequent forums for the community to express concerns. Chairman Firenze noted that the Selectmen's untelevised office hours that are scheduled about once a month have poor attendance, as does the "Questions from Town Residents" section at each Selectmen meeting. The Board agreed that holding such forums twice a year seemed appropriate. Mr. Younger will schedule another one for October.

Belmont Center Planning Group Report - Next Steps

Chairman Firenze acknowledged the amount of work done on this report. He added that the lack of input from landlords and businesses is problematic, as their direct involvement is necessary going forward. The Board discussed several issues that may be addressed in the near future, including putting meters on Leonard Street, initiating reverse angle parking on Leonard Street, and addressing trash collection challenges. The next steps include Mr. Szklut working on the Center's parking issues.

Committee Vacancies and Appointments

Chairman Firenze stated that the Board now knows which committees are permanent committees (as delineated by state statute), and which would require a Town Meeting vote to eliminate.

The Board reviewed various committees to determine where action was needed immediately, as well as which committees can be disbanded. A letter will be sent to various town committees to inform them that their committee is under consideration to be disbanded. This letter will request that they send a response letter back to the Board saying why they should continue, including their goals and objectives.

Committee appointments will be made in early September.

The Board moved: To reappoint the following people to the position of Constable: Thomas Maguire, David Benoit, Philip Richmond and Donna Feeley.
The motion carried unanimously (3-0).

[At this time in the meeting the Board took a five minute recess.]

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Younger reported on the following items:

" July 2nd Storm: A 15 minute, extremely intense storm downed a number of trees and the highway department did an excellent job addressing the trees and drains.

" Selectmen Staff Acknowledgement: Have received thank you notes regarding block party requests which the staff have placed on the town website.

" Senior Center: The framing is continuing and occupancy is expected at the end of March.

" Pleasant Street: The paving will begin on July 8.

" Pavement Management: Bids are due on July 25th.

" Skating Rink and Underwood Pool: Have asked for FY08 expenditures and revenues information - (privatization will be examined).

" Health Insurance: The Town's self-insurance program is working well and the fund from which claims are paid is growing faster than had been projected.

Mr. Conti updated the Board on the town's insurance policies. For FY09 the Town has renewed its workers' compensation policy at a 4% increase, and its other property and liability policies at no significant increase. Next spring, the Town will put these coverages out for competitive bid for a three-year period beginning with FY10.

Chairman Firenze informed the Board that the DiGiovanni family has signed an agreement with the state for an easement to allow a bike path to be built across a corner of the DiGiovannis' property. The DiGiovanni family has requested that the gateway to the bike path on Brighton Street be dedicated to the late Mr. Joseph P. DiGiovanni.

The Board moved: To sign a letter to MassHighway requesting that the bike path entrance on Brighton Street be designated as the Joseph P. DiGiovanni Memorial Gateway.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

ACTION BY CONSENT

Approval of Board of Selectmen Minutes - June 9, 2008

The Board moved: To approve the minutes of June 9, 2008.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

ACTION BY WRITING (continued)

Town Accountant Reappointment - 3 Year Term

Chair Firenze asked for a motion to reappoint Town Accountant Hagg to her position.

The Board moved: To reappoint Barbara Hagg to the Accountant position.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT (continued)

Executive Session

The Board moved: To enter into executive session at 10:04 pm to discuss negotiations with non-union personnel and purchase of real property, and not to return to open session.
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

(During executive session, one substantive motion was made and passed unanimously. The Board adjourned at 10:19 pm.)

Thomas G. Younger, Town Administrator